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## CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS TO THE THIRD WORLD

Soviet deliveries of planes, tanks, ships and other major weapons of war to the so-called "Third World" over the past decade nearly double those of the United States. Some 74,000 major weapons systems have been sent by the Soviets to nations in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America, compared to some 44,000 by the United States, Government estimates reveal.

A just released special report -- Conventional Arms Transfers in the Third World, 1972-1981 -- provides for the first time annual estimates of arms actually transferred to -- or retransferred within -- Third World regions from various sources.

The report also shows that for the decade 1972-1981, all other suppliers of major weapons to the Third World (that is, the Warsaw Pact allies of the Soviet Union, plus the major Western European allies of the United States) taken as a group exceeded the United States: some 61,000 planes, ships and tanks were transferred by these countries, compared to the 44,000 by the U.S., a margin of

- 2 -

The data just released are broken down into three major categories of conventional armaments -- ground force weapons, air force weapons and naval vessels. Each of these categories is in turn subdivided into three or more subgroups such as tanks and self-propelled guns, supersonic combat aircraft, and missile patrol boats; in these weapons, the Soviet Union has, illustratively, provided 41%, 56% and 64%, respectively, of the Third World's supply over the past decade.

Thus, in some weapons categories, Soviet deliveries have exceeded those of the United States for all or most of the decade. In the other categories, the Soviets surpassed U.S. deliveries by the mid-1970s. Today the Soviets exceed U.S. levels in most weapons categories considered in this Report.

Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance, Science and Technology James L. Buckley, released the report. It makes clear that, contrary to the popular image of the dizzying upward arms spiral, arms transfers in fact fluctuated widely from year to year and, viewed over a sufficiently long period of time, do not show a distinct upward trend.

- 3 -

What does move upward sharply is the current dollar cost of arms transfers -- both because of inflation and because of real price increases as modern weapons grow more complex. Most previous studies were expressed in such dollar values, and showed a very different, but -- the new report proves -- an incomplete and thus misleading picture.

The report does provide, for comparison purposes, current and constant dollar estimates of arms sales agreements. In the aggregate, these place the U.S. ahead of the Soviet Union by a margin of roughly 2 to 1 in dollar value estimates.. The major reason for this is that well over half the dollar value of U.S. military transfers during this decade consists of construction, training, and various other services, not weapons. In this respect, the dollar value method of calculation is consistent with previous arms transfer studies.

By providing actual weapons transfer data for the first time, the new report gives the public a choice of perspectives from which to study this important issue.